Clatsop County Historical Society Quarterly

CUMTUX

Vol. 40, No. 3—Summer 2020

Clark, Robert Carlton, Robert Horace Down, and George Verne Blue. 1925. *A history of Oregon.* Chicago: Row, Peterson and Co. page 99

John Jacob Astor
Artistic work by Gearhart School student Wesley Albert Ober

In This Issue . . .

As one old newspaper reported, Astoria has a peculiar and interesting history. Spain, France, England and the U.S. all had claims on it at times. Though settlers here in the 1840s and 1850s badgered the U.S. government to let Oregon join the Union, the U.S. Congress was in no hurry to do that. The frontier attracted a reckless element of humanity difficult to restrain. The need for laws and punishment for violation of the laws led residents to adopt a temporary government without the backing of the U.S. Eventually Oregon became a territory of the U.S. and finally a state. The process met many hurdles. Anyone today with access to the internet can follow along this process by looking up two websites, newspapers.com (a fee site) and oregonnews.uoregon.edu (free). Most of the stories in this issue were downloaded from these websites to illustrate our area's history. The maps and a couple photos came from old school books. See above example of John Jacob Astor, enhanced by a bored Gearhart School student.

—The Editor

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40 Tabitha Moffatt Brown

Note: The names of several people reoccur throughout this issue:

William H. Gray
Donation land claim on Clatsop Plains and house at 8th and Waterfront.

John McClure
Donation land claim in Astoria, 1st to 13th Streets, House on Franklin near 12th Street.

John Shively
Donation land claim in Astoria, 13th to 33rd Street. Marker on East side of 15th Street between Exchange and Franklin Streets.

Col. James Taylor
Donation land claim on Clatsop Plains, Mansion NW corner 16th and Franklin Ave. moved and converted to apartments on Exchange Street.

Front Cover:
Ramsay Crooks, member of Astor's overland party from a family album. CCHS #20.001.157
see page 7.

CUMTUX: Chinook jargon:
"To know…to inform"

Clatsop County
1806 to 1861

Introduction

This issue contains partial or whole newspaper stories of a few events in the early history of Clatsop County, often when the information was new. The stories reflect the hopes and frustrations of those who lived here many years ago.

Astoria was renamed Fort George when the British took over in 1813 and for more than three decades was known by both names.

The full stories are online. Original spelling has been retained in most instances. (Spelling of a word sometimes varied through the years and even in the same story.) Words capitalized now, often were not in old newspapers.

Im. refers to the page image number
&c. = etcetera
Lat. = latitude
Inst. = the present month
Ult. = the last month
Americans = those people from the United States

Timeline

1792 – Capt. Robert Gray discovers the Columbia River
1805 – Lewis & Clark Expedition arrives at the Pacific Ocean
1810 – Winship Brothers attempt a settlement
1811 – Astor's trading party arrives
1813 – British claim Astoria as spoils of war/rename Ft. George
1818 – Astoria returned at end of war to Americans/Joint occupancy with G.B.
1832 – Capt. Wyeth brings emigrants
1843 – The first major migration to Oregon
1844 – Clatsop County organized
1847 – Whitman Massacre
1849 – Oregon Territory established/Gold strike at Sutter's mill in California.
1856 – Astoria incorporated as a town
1859 – Oregon becomes a state November 4, 1806

A Letter from William Clark to His Brother.

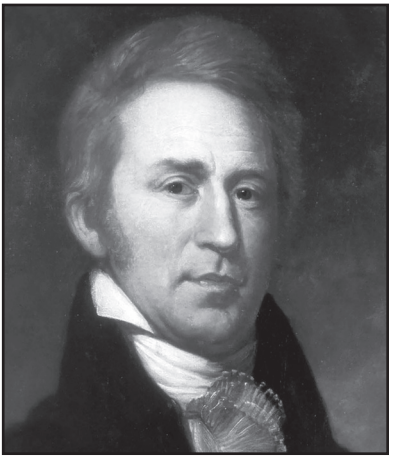
While President Thomas Jefferson was negotiating for the U.S. to get the Louisiana Purchase from France, he was making plans for the exploration of the western part of the American continent to find a convenient commercial pathway over that land to the mouth of the Columbia from which ships could carry on trade with the Orient. The journey of Lewis and Clark was well underway when William Clark wrote the following:

On the morning of the 17th of August, I arrived at the forks of Jefferson's River, where I met Capt. Lewis, who had previously penetrated with a party of three men, to the waters of the Columbia, discovered a band of the Shoshoni Nation, and had found means to induce 35 of their chiefs and warriors to accompany him to that place. From these people we learned that the river on which they resided was not navigable, and that a passage through the mountains in that direction was impractical; being unwilling to confide in this unfavorable account of the natives, it was concerted between Captain Lewis and myself, that one of us should go forward immediately with a small party to explore the river; while the other in the interim would lay up the canoes at that place, and engage the natives with their horses to assist in transporting our stores and baggage to their camp

Accordingly, I set out the next day, passed the dividing mountains between the waters of the Missouri and Columbia, and descending the river which I since called the East Fork of Lewis's River, about 70 miles,—Finding that the Indians account of the country in the direction of that river was correct, I returned and joined Captain Lewis on the 29th of August at the Shoshoni camp, excessively fatigued as you may suppose; having passed mountains almost inaccessible, and compelled to subsist on berries during the greater part of my rout.

We now purchased 17 horses of the Indians, and hired a guide, who assured us that he could in fifteen days take us to a large river in the open country west of these mountains, by a rout some distance to the north of the river on which they lived, and that by which the natives, west of the mountains, visits the plain of the Missouri, for the purpose of hunting the buffalo.

Every preparation being made, we set forward with our guide on the 31st of August, through the



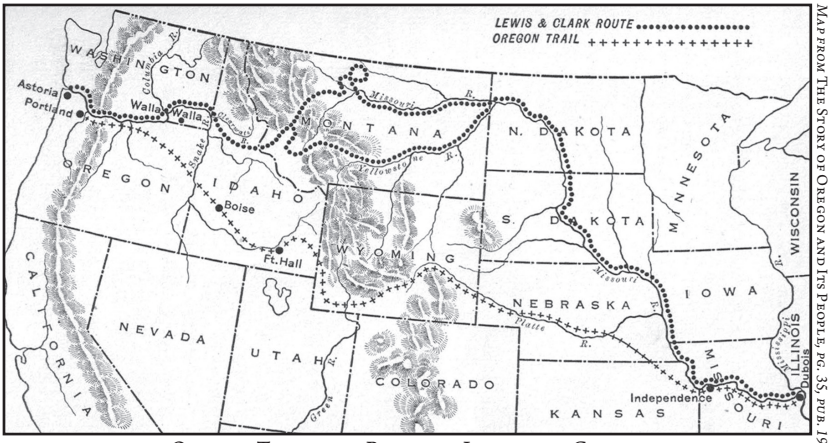
Independence National Historic Park Collection, Philadelphia, PA.

Portrait of William Clark by Charles Willson Peale, from life, 1807.

tremendous mountains, in which we continued until the 22nd of September, before we reached the lower country beyond them; on our way we met with the Olelachshook, a band of the Tuchapaks, from whom we obtained an accession of seven horses and exchanged eight or ten others; this proved an infinite service to us as we were compelled to subsist on horse meat about eight days before they reached the Kooskooske.

During our passage over the mountains we suffered every thing which hunger, cold and fatigue could impose; nor did our difficulties with respect to our arrival at the Cooskooske; for although the Pollotepallers, with a numerous nation inhabiting that country, were extremely hospitable, and for a few trifling articles furnished us with an abundance of roots and dried salmon, the food to which they were accustomed, we found that we could not subsist on these articles, and almost all of us grew sick on eating them; we were obliged therefore to have recourse to the flesh of horses and dogs, as food to supply the deficiency of our guns, which produced but little meat, as game was scarce in the vicinity of our camp on the Kooskooske, where we were compelled to remain in order to construct our perogues to descend the river. At this season the salmon were meagre and form but indifferent food. While we remained here I was myself sick for several days, and my friend captain Lewis, suffered a severe indisposition.

Having completed four perogues and a small canoe, we gave our horses in charge to the Pollotepallors until we returned, and on the 7th of October re-embarked for the Pacific ocean. We descended by the route I have already mentioned. The water of the river being low at this season, we experienced much difficulty in descending, we found it obstructed by a great number of difficult and dangerous rapids, in passing of which our perogues several times filled, and the men escaped narrowly with their lives. However this difficulty does not exist in high water, which happens within the period which I have previously mentioned. We found the natives extremely numerous and generally friendly, though we have on several occasions owed our lives and the fate of the



Map from The Story of Oregon and Its People, pg. 35, pub. 1909

Oregon Trail and Route of Lewis and Clark.

expedition to our number, which consisted of 31 men.

On the 17th of November we reached the ocean, where various considerations induced us to spend the winter; we therefore searched for an eligible situation for that purpose, and selected a spot on the south side of a little river, called by the natives Netal, which discharges itself at a small bar on the south side of the Columbia, and 14 miles within Point Adams. Here we constructed some log houses, and defended them with a common stockade work; this place we called Fort Clatsop, after a nation of that name who were our nearest neighbors.

In this country we found an abundance of elk, on which we subsisted principally during the last winter; we left Fort Clatsop on the 27th of March. On our homeward bound voyage, being much better acquainted with the country, we were enabled to take such precautions as in a great measure secured us from the want of provision at any time and greatly lessened our fatigue, when compared with those with which we were compelled to submit in our eastward bound journey. We have not lost a man since we left the Mandians [Mandans], a circumstance which I assure is a pleasing consideration to me. As I will shortly be with you, and the post is now waiting, I deem it unnecessary here to attempt minutely to detail the occurrences of the last eighteen months.

Your affectionate brother,
WM. CLARK.

Dec. 19, 1810 Aberdeen Journal and General Advertiser *for the North of Scotland Pg. 3*

NEWS REACHES GREAT BRITAIN

John Jacob Astor, a wealthy New York businessman, put into operation plans for a fur trading establishment on the west coast of the continent. These included parties of men going overland, and ships taking supplies.

The Government of the United States has recently sent out an expedition by sea, and another by land [Astor's parties]. The former sailed to the southward, for the purpose of doubling Cape Horn, of traversing the Pacific, and reaching the Columbia. The latter was to proceed westward, to follow the Missouri, to cross the great ridge of mountains, and to arrive at the same river by this long, though, in point of actual distance, much shorter route.

The expedition of Captain Meriwether Lewis was only preparatory to the present, which is to settle a new colony either in the bay of the Columbia, or more properly at its mouth or on its shores—a colony which will perhaps hereafter conduct a vast trade with different parts of the East. The naval expedition conveyed stores and necessaries for the settlement of the new colony.—A principal object in view is to open a communication between the Missouri and the Columbia; or, in other words, between the Atlantic and the Pacific, with as short, or as commodious a carrying place over the mountain tract as can possibly be found.—The great obstacle, indeed, to an extensive intercourse between the eastern and western sides of the North American continent, an obstacle which time only can surmount, and after all imperfectly surmount, is the intervening ridge of mountains, which is broad, and supposed to be free from snow only about three or four months in the year. These months will therefore be hereafter busy months for the transport of commodities. The want of roads of culture and of population, time and industry will remedy; and that the Anglo-Americans will hereafter carry on across the Pacific, a vast and lucrative commerce with China and Japan, in spite of the present timid and jealous character of their Governments, can scarcely be doubted.

January 7, 1811 Aurora General Advertiser (Philadelphia, Penn.) Pg. 2

ENGLISH WAR SHIPS

The English, competitors of the Americans and intent on stopping American expansion, attempted to waylay the ships John Jacob Astor was sending. While

discussing "the cloven foot of the bank of England" an American writer warns of the treachery of the English government.

…It may be recollected, tho' it has not made much eclat [attention], that a company was formed at N. York to make a settlement on Columbia river, and the shore of the Pacific Ocean, carrying into action the project of Mr. Jefferson for opening a vast commerce by this rout and the Missouri. Mr. Astor it seems was very active in this great enterprize; would it be believed, that advice was sent to Hallifax and British ships of war were stationed to intercept the ships while leaving New York; Mr. Astor was too much beloved to have such premeditated villainy successful, and his captains contrived to elude the British cruisers.

April 19, 1811 Pittsburgh Weekly Gazette *(Pittsburgh, Penn.) Pg. 3*

ASTOR'S OVERLAND PARTY

Mr. Wilson P. Hunt, left this place last Monday, with a well equipped barge, to join his associates, at the Otto village*, to proceed on his expedition to the Columbia river. His party amounts to about 70 able-bodied men, nerved to hardship.

We understand the New-York Fur company, to whom Mr. Hunt is attached, have dispatched a well furnished ship, to meet the party on the shores of the Pacific. Mr. Hunt is accompanied by Mr. Bradbury and a Mr. Nuttall, who are deputed to this country, to explore and make known its riches, in the Animal, Vegetal and Mineral kingdoms; for which purpose, they are provided with the necessary tests. Mr. B. has

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John Jacob Astor
engraving after a painting by
Alonzo Chappel.

**The Otto or Otoe/Oto people were a semi-nomadic people on the Central Plains along the bank of the Missouri River in Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa and Missouri.*

devoted nearly 12 months to the examination of this neighborhood, and has been enabled to introduce to England, a very considerable number of plants, before unknown to the Botanic gardens of that country. From the superior advantages which the country of Le haut Missouri furnish, we trust these gentlemen will return with a rich scientic [sic] harvest, gratifying to the philosopher, and probably useful to society in general.

July 8, 1813 The Maryland Gazette *(Annapolis, Maryland) Pg. 4*

RAMSAY CROOK'S STORY

The members of Astor's overland party were unprepared for the many difficulties they encountered on their way to the mouth of the Columbia and back. The party including the leaders and 60 men, had left St. Louis in the beginning of March 1811. The survivors arrived at Astoria on the 10th of May. This same story appeared in many newspapers at the time. Following is a short selection describing incidents along the way.

Unable to proceed by water, Messrs. McKenzie, M'Clellan and Reed, set out in different directions including down the river, for the purpose of finding Indians and buying horses. Mr. Crooks with a few men returned to Henry's fork for those they had left, while Mr. Hunt remained with the main body of the men in trapping beaver for their support. Mr. C. finding the distance much greater by land than they had contemplated, returned at the end of three days, where waiting five more, expecting relief from below, the near approach of winter made them determine on depositing all superfluous articles and proceeding on foot. Accordingly on the tenth of November, Messrs. Hunt and Crooks set out each with 18 men, one party on the north and the other on the south side of the river.

Mr. Hunt was fortunate in finding Indians with abundance of salmon and some horses, but Mr. Crooks saw but few, and in general too miserably poor to afford his party much assistance; 13 days travel brought the latter to a high range of mountains through which the river forced a passage, and the bank being their only guide, by climbing over points of rocky ridges projecting into the stream, they kept as near it as possible, till in the evening of the 3rd Dec, impassable precipices of immense height put an end to all hopes of following the margin of this watercourse, which was here not more than 30 yards wide, ran with incredible velocity and was withal so foamingly tumultuous, that even had the opposite bank been fit for their purpose, attempt at rafting would

have been perfect madness, as they could only have the inducement of ending in a watery grave, a series of hardships and privations, to which the most hardy and determined of the human race must have found himself inadequate. They attempted to climb the mountains still bent on pushing on, but after ascending for half a day, they discovered to their sorrow that they were not half way to the summit, and the snow already too deep for men in their emaciated state to proceed further.

Regaining the river bank, they returned and on the third day met with Mr. Hunt and party, with one horse proceeding downwards; a canoe was soon made of a horsehide and in it transported what meat they could spare to Mr. Crook's starving followers, who for the first eighteen days after leaving the place of deposit had subsisted on half a meal in twenty-four hours, and in the last nine days, had eaten only one beaver, a dog, a few wild cherries and old moccasin soals [soles], having traveled during these 27 days at least 550 miles. For the next four days, both parties continued on up the river without any other support than what little rose buds and cherries they could find, but here they luckily fell in with some Snake Indians from whom they got five horses, giving three guns and some other articles for the same. Starvation had bereft J.B. Provost of his senses entirely, and on seeing the horse flesh on the opposite shore, was so agitated in crossing in a skin canoe that he upset it and was unfortunately drowned.—From hence Mr. Hunt went on to a camp of Soshonies about 90 miles above, where procuring a few horses and a guide he set out for the main Columbia, across the mountains to the south west, leaving the river where it entered the range, and on it, Mr. Crooks and five men unable to travel.

Mr. H. lost a Canadian named Carriere by starvation before he met the Shy-ey-to-ga Indians in the Columbia plains, from whom getting a supply of provision, he soon reached the main river, which he descended in canoes and arrived without any further loss at Astoria in the month of February. …

Three of the five men who remained with Mr. Crooks, afraid of perishing by want, left him in February on a small river on the road by which Mr. Hunt had passed in quest of Indians, and have not since been heard of. Mr. C. had followed Mr. H's track in the snow for seven days, but coming to a low prairie, he lost every appearance of the trace and was compelled to pass the remaining part of winter in the mountains, subsisting sometimes on beaver and horse meat, and their skins, and at others on their success in finding roots. Finally on the last of March, the other only Canadian being unable to proceed was left

with a lodge of Soshonies, and Mr. C. with John Day finding the snow sufficiently diminished, undertook, from Indians information to cross the last ridge, which they happily effected and reached the banks of the Columbia by the middle of April, where in the beginning of May they fell in with Messrs. Steuart, having been a few days before stripped of everything they possessed by a band of villains near the falls. On the tenth of May, they arrived safe at Astoria, the principal establishment of the Pacific Fur Company, within 14 miles of Cape Disappointment.

May 11, 1812 The Evening Post *(New York, New York) P. 3*

THE *TONQUIN*

After landing Astor's men at the site that was to become Astoria, the captain of the Tonquin headed north to trade with the Indians.

A letter from Mr. Nath'l Woodbury, of Danvers, dated at Kegharni (in the South Sea) Sept. 5, 1811, contains the following melancholy report—"That in June last the ship *Tonquin*, Thorn, master, was lying at anchor at a village near Nootka Sound, lat. 49, 20, N. for the purpose of trade; that a great number of Indians were on board, when, on some misunderstanding, they suddenly attacked the crew, killed every one on board except the captain and one more, who fled into the magazine, and seeing no possibility of escape, chose to be their own executioners, and accordingly put fire to powder, which blew the ship to pieces, and destroyed many Indians. At this time the boat was on shore for water; seeing the situation of the vessel, they endeavored to make their escape, and their first landing was at Classet, where they were instantly shot. The ship bro't out a large number of persons, part of a company who have commenced a settlement on Columbia River—and the place where she was taken is not more than two degrees north of the place where she landed her settlers."

July 8, 1819 North Star *(Danville, Vermont) Pg. 1*

RETURN OF ASTORIA TO THE U.S.

In 1812 war broke out between England and the United States. Ownership of the Astoria post changed hands.

Capt. Biddle of the U.S. Sloop-of-War *Ontario* arrived at the Columbia River to demand the return of Astoria to the U.S. In a report, he said, "On the 19th of August we anchored off the entrance of that

river [Columbia]. The bar being too intricate and dangerous for a vessel of the *Ontario's* draft of water to pass in, we manned three boats with fifty well armed seamen and rowed up the river to the establishment founded there by a Mr. Astor of New York, but then in possession of the British N.W. Company—you may recollect that this post was taken from Mr. Astor during the late war with England—by the treaty of Ghent it must be restored to us, and I understand it has actually been given up, since we left there, to the United States agent appointed to receive it. It is situated on what is called Point George, about 18 miles from the entrance of the river, consists of one large frame house, five or six small ones, some storehouses, shops, etc. Around the whole is a strong high picket, to protect them from the Indians, who are sometimes disposed to be troublesome. Twenty-five whites, the same number of Sandwich Islanders, with three six pounders, constitutes the whole force of the settlement. Captain Biddle was not authorized by his instructions to haul down the English flag and place in its stead the American stripes—we however, took formal possession of the country on both sides of the river in the names of the United States with all the ceremony usual on such occasions.

From the January 1, 1902 Morning Oregonian, page 46

FIRST OREGON BILL IN CONGRESS (1820-21)

To John Floyd, Virginia's 18th Governor, belongs the honor of introducing in Congress the first bill for the occupation and settlement of Oregon by the Americans. Floyd's bill was introduced at the session of 1820-21. He had read some of Benton's essays on Oregon, and had met and talked with Ramsay Crooks and Russell Farnham, who had been in Astor's service in the founding of Astoria. He moved for the appointment of a select committee to consider the subject of Oregon and report. "The committee," says Benton, "was granted by the House more through courtesy to a respected member than with any view to business results." In due time the committee reported a bill which was treated with parliamentary courtesy. "It was read twice," Benton continues, "and committed to a committee of the whole House, most of the members not considering it a serious proceeding." But it was the entering wedge. It directed attention to Oregon and created in the East a sentiment favoring American occupation.

March 7, 1821, National Banner and Nashville Whig *(Nashville, Tenn.) Pg. 1*

CONGRESSIONAL REPORT ON THE OCCUPATION OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

"Report of the Committee, to whom was referred a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 19th of December last, directing an inquiry into the situation of the settlements on the Pacific Ocean, and the expediency of occupying the Columbia River, accompanying the bill to authorize the occupation of the Columbia River."

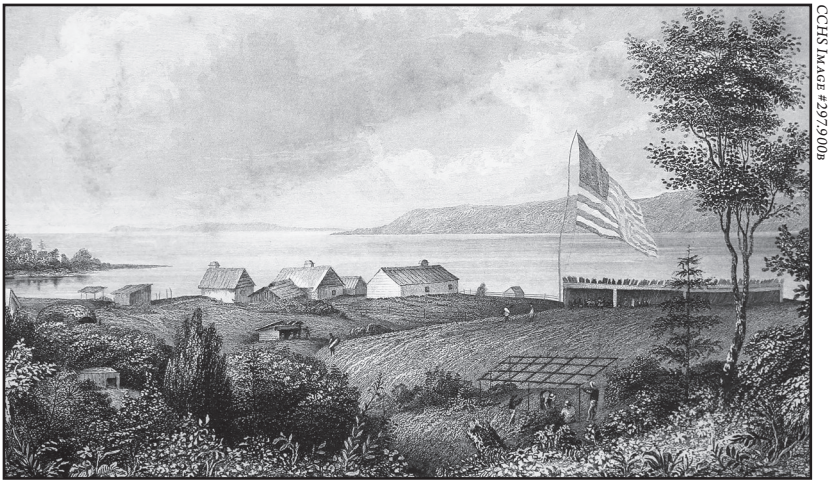
(Note: this is a detailed history of claims of ownership of land in what is now the west coast of the American continent by European countries and the U.S., concluding that the ownership was in U.S. hands by reason of the other countries not claiming ownership, by an establishment in the year 1785-6 at the mouth of the Columbia river by Mr. Hendricks and later by Lewis and Clark. The fact that Great Britain returned ownership of Astoria to the U.S. at the end of the war of 1812 confirmed their recognition that the post had belonged to the U.S.)

September 10, 1845 Tioga Eagle *(Wellsboro, Penn.) Pg. 2*

NEWS FROM OREGON AND CALIFORNIA

Two parties from beyond the Rocky Mountains arrived at Independence, Missouri, on the 10th ult. [in the last month].The two companies met in the wilderness on their way in, and both arrived together. One, Mr. Shively and company, left Oregon on the 19th April, and the other, Mr. Sappington and company, left California on the 4th of that month.

The Oregon settlers have a fine prospect for an abundant crop; and were making ample preparations to have everything necessary for the emigration which went out the present year. The advance party of the region emigrants who went out this year, were met on the 8th July last, at Green River, about 250 miles this side of Fort Hall. The emigrants were traveling in detached parties the last of whom Mr. Shively met only one day's travel beyond fort Laramie. Nothing had occurred to them on their route worthy of particular notice. They were all well supplied with an abundance of provisions and their stock and teams had stood the trip exceedingly well, with the exception of their horses. These he states were poor and seemed much jaded and exhausted. There was no sickness of any kind amongst the emigrants. He states that the number of cattle was immense. The emigrants numbered about 2,375 souls, large and small. Owing to the recent disturbances in Oregon with the Walla Walla Indians, it was anticipated that



CCHS Image #297900B

Astoria, Columbia River. *ca. 1841*
Engraving by Rawdon, Wright & Hatch, from a drawing by A. T. Agate in the *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition* by Charles Wilkes. Vol. V, Chapter IV, page 113.

the emigrants would be harassed by them on their route. They were advised, however, of this anticipated attack, and intended gathering at Fort Hall in sufficient numbers to repel any attack that might be meditated against them. Mr. Shively is of the opinion that the settlers in Oregon will have disturbances with the Indians during the coming winter, but nothing serious was apprehended from this expected outbreak. He states that many of the settlers are in favor of organizing an independent government, thinking themselves too far from the United States for protection, unless the American Government would act with more promptness and decision than it has done heretofore…

On his visit back east, John Shively was appointed to the position of Post Master at Astoria, serving the west coast. He then returned to Oregon.

MORE FROM OREGON

From a letter of the Marshal and High Sheriff of Oregon—who has been there 15 years—received a few days since, dated 12th of April, written to his brother, we make a few extracts.—*Platte Argus,* Platte City, Missouri [newspaper]

"Last year I raised 1500 bushels of wheat—this year I think I will have 3,000 bushels. I have a large farm lying 8 miles from ship navigation, worth as much as half the county you live in. I have a large building in Oregon city that has cost me about $7,000, etc…. I have besides 70 head of cattle, 15 head of horses, 200 hogs, 2 dogs, 1 cat, 3 children and the old woman, with chickens innumerable.

With regard to the honor heaped upon me in this country, I am High Sheriff and Territorial Marshal of Oregon—I have been going around the circuit together with the court officers, and have to start to the mouth of the river in the morning to the county of Clatsop. We have five counties in the Territory [of Oregon], viz: Clackmas, Yamhillis, Champoek, Twality and Clatsop. As for our connections with the United States, we are almost independent of Uncle Sam.—For some time past I have been employed taking the census—the number of souls is 4,000.

A Provisional Government

15 Dec. 1845, The Courier-Journal *(Louisville, Kentucky) Pg. 2*

Mr. Benton [in the U.S. Congress] presented a memorial from the American citizens resident in Oregon stating that they had formed a provisional government for themselves, the influence of which had been very beneficial; but in consequence of their exposed and defenseless condition praying the United States to establish a territorial government over them; which on motion of Mr. Benton, was read and ordered to be printed. *Note: But still nothing happened.*

Wheat A New Monetary System.

A notice in the *Oregon Spectator* March 5, 1846 told residents that their taxes could be paid in wheat and that they should deliver the wheat in Clatsop County to the Hudson Bay Company's warehouse at Fort George. Those in Vancouver County could leave wheat at the warehouse at Cowlitz or Fort Vancouver, those of Twalaty county at the company's warehouse at Linnton or at F.W. Pettigrove's warehouse at Portland, those at Klackamas county at the flouring mills of John McLaughlin, or the Milling Company at Oregon City, those of Champoick county at the Milling Company's warehouse at the Bute, or the Hudson Bay Company warehouse at Champoick, those of Yam Hill county where the collector of Yam Hill county would direct. (Astoria was then still known as Fort George.)

March 19, 1846, The Oregon Spectator, *Oregon City, [Oregon] Im. 2*

THE ORGANIC LAW.

The public have had time to examine the Organic Law, as published in the first number of the *Spectator.*

The law is the Constitution of the provisional government of Oregon.

The first article of said compact is simply a declaration of rights, dividing the government into three distinct departments—the legislative, executive and judicial; also, prohibiting slavery or involuntary servitude.

The second article defines the powers of the legislative, executive and judicial departments—defining the franchises—giving the form of an oath all officers under the compact are required to take. In substance, the oath is as follows:

"I do solemnly swear, that I will support the Organic Laws of the provisional government of Oregon, so far as said Organic Laws are consistent with my duties as a citizen of the United States, or a subject of Great Britain, and faithfully demean myself in office."

Here we have to admit that the oath is not only peculiar, but indefinite. It is not an oath of allegiance to the provisional government of Oregon, and it leaves the person who takes the oath, to exercise his own judgment with regard to his duties, as a citizen of the United States or a subject of Great Britain, consequently it is indefinite.

"Hence" it is that we are informed that the officers, in administering the oath, have been in the habit of only administering that part of the oath that applied to the citizen or subject, as the case might be.

The third article is the Land Law, defining the manner of making and recording land claims; it also points out the manner that amendments shall be made to the Organic Law. Amendments to that law are proposed, and will be submitted to the people at the June election; we will therefore leave the merits or demerits of said proposed amendments for the candidates for the legislature to discuss.

The Liquor Law

Much interest appears to be manifested in the community upon the subject of the law that passed the legislature at the last December session, as published in the first number of the *Spectator*, to "prevent the introduction, sale, and distillation of ardent spirits in Oregon." We are well satisfied that if ardent spirits could be prohibited from being either introduced or manufactured in Oregon, it would add much to the peace and happiness of the people, as well as the prosperity of the country. The first grand object of all governments should be to establish for themselves the fundamental principles of government, defining the grant of powers extended to each department—in short, commanding that to be done which ought to be done, and prohibiting that which ought not to be done, by either of the departments of the government. Notwithstanding we view the government of Oregon

as only temporary, brought about for the protection and regulation of its citizens, until such time as the United States shall extend her jurisdiction and protection; yet there is as much necessity, and the laws should be just as binding and enforced with as much energy, as if Oregon had assumed a stand among the nations of the earth as an independent nation.

It is contended by many, and it maybe so, that the law on ardent spirits is unconstitutional; but the only legal way to ascertain that fact is, to refer the matter to the supreme judge. Would it not be more expedient to make an effort to enforce the law, and let the issue be decided by the proper authority? Great excitement on any subject is injurious.

March 19, 1846 Oregon Spectator, Im. 3

LIQUOR PROBLEMS

At a large and respectable meeting of the ladies and gentlemen of Oregon City, held in the Methodist church, on Thursday evening the 12th Inst., the following resolutions were adopted:

Col. Taylor, the chairman, then called upon Mr. Gray to state the object of the meeting, who arose and said that the law in relation to ardent spirits had been for some time, and was now, daily violated, and that the object of this meeting was to arouse public sentiment, and appoint a committee of vigilance, whose special duty it should be to see that the Liquor law was fully enforced.

The resolutions, members offered were:

Rev. Mr. Parish: That the continuance of peace and friendship among ourselves and with the natives among us, depends on the strict enforcement of the law on ardent spirits.

Elder H. Johnson: That no man has a right to offer to his fellow-man, either as a beverage, gift, or for gain, any article that he knows, from experience, or from the testimony of others, tends to injure or deprive his fellow man of a single right, privilege, power, or faculty.

Mr. Barlow: That every friend of the human family will oppose the reign of King Alcohol with all his power, and every friend of good order in Oregon will oppose, to the utmost of his ability, the use of ardent spirits, as a drink, and will have for his motto—"peaceably, if we can; but forcibly, if we must.

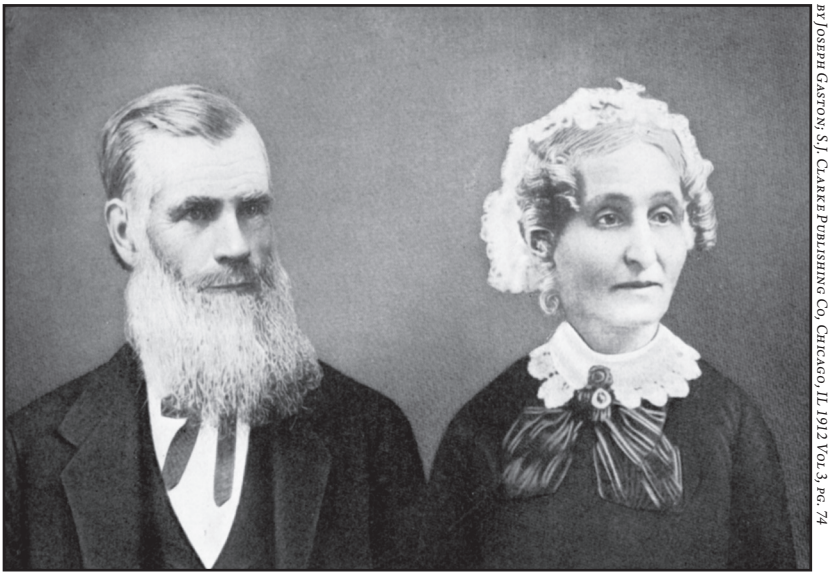
A vigilance committee was then named.

"Blue Ruin" (1846)

The Daily Astorian, March 22, 1881, Im. 3

A series of newspaper stories tell of the problems alcoholic drinks brought to this area over many years.

Hoochinoo, or spirits dispelled from molasses…was known in the early days of Oregon as "Blue Ruin," and was manufactured in this city [Astoria] in Col. McClure's time, in 1846, when Astoria was occupied by the Hudson bay company as a trading post. Richard McCrary, an American, claimed to be a distiller, and disputed the right of the law prohibiting him from following his legitimate business, and equipped with a large iron pot, that had found its way into the country by accident, and a few home made appliances, he went to work and brewed a vile article of molasses that came from the islands and distilled it. The result was an intoxicating beverage of which a small dose produced insanity.



The Centennial History of Oregon, 1811-1912 by Joseph Gaston; S.J. Clarke Publishing Co, Chicago, IL 1912 Vol 3, pg. 74

William H. Gray and his wife Caroline lived on Clatsop Plains. He also had a house on the waterfront & 8th Street in Astoria where Bethenia Owens (later Adair) boarded. One of the Gray's daughters married Jacob Kamm one of the wealthiest businessmen in Oregon. Gray wrote a book, "History of Oregon, 1792–1849," published in 1870.

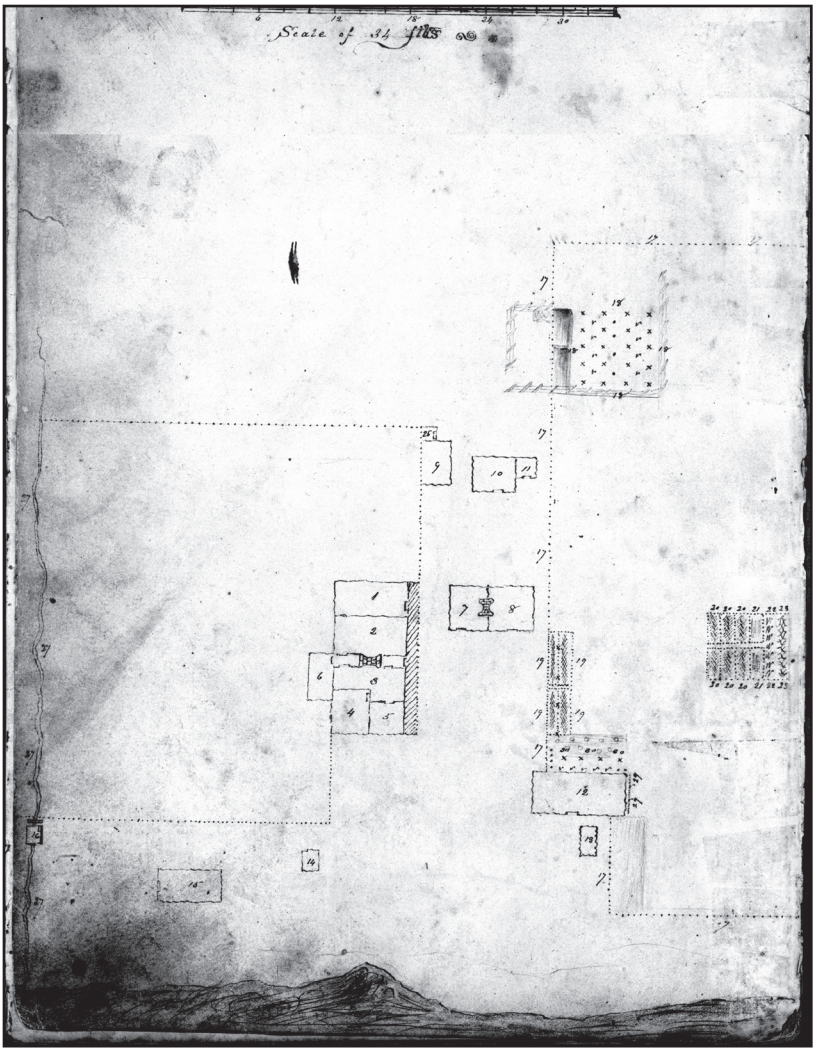
An abbreviated and paraphrased excerpt from

ALEXANDER LATTY'S JOURNAL OF 1846.

This journal was kept by the Scottish storekeeper at Ft. George for the Hudson Bay Company, commissioned by the British. In it he listed the ship traffic in and out of the Columbia River, the furs he took in from the Indians, the work in the fields and buildings done by the Hawaiian laborers and others, and the growing difficulties encountered with the American immigrants. Following is his description of a fight he had with American settler John McClure. Both men had local Native American wives. Latty and his wife (known as Sikkus) worked for the Hudson Bay Company; all others mentioned were Americans.

May 30: At 10, as the canoes' bottoms were dry, we took all hands down with me to put them in a place of safety and covered them with brush to preserve them from the sun. While we were procuring the brush, McClure and a man named Wheeler came past. McClure invited me home with him to take a glass of grog. I told him, no. Mrs. Trask asked me if I would take a little fresh salmon with her. I said yes, as it was the first I would have eaten this year. While we were eating dinner, McClure continued to be agitated and used the most awful language. I said, "Colonel, would you like to have the chopping off of one of the Company's officer's heads?," etc. My wife came in, in the mean-time, and told me there were some Indians with beavers to trade and told him, at the same time, that he was a very bad man to take me down there. She was scolding him a little when he called her "a damned whore." She slapped his face, then he struck her in the face in return. They then scuffled together. McClure returned to the house in a towering rage, telling Mr. and Mrs. Trask what my wife had done, and swearing he would shoot her, as he prepared his rifle. He then took deliberate aim at one of us when Mr. Trask grabbed the gun from him, or was trying to, when McClure slapped at him, but misfired during the scuffle. Unknown to us, we were now beyond the rifle's reach. Soon after this another bullet came within a foot of Henry Colly who was walking on the gallery when he came in and told me the Colonel was firing at us. Henry in a short time after this went out again. He [McClure] was up at the salmon store. Henry was in the act of talking to him when he again rose his riffle took aim—pulled but snapped. Henry now came running in to me in a hurry, telling me a second time of his conduct. I did not load (my gun) but immediately went out, when McClure was now apparently ramming down a second charge in his rifle. I said to him, jestingly, "Ram well, Colonel." And then again saying, "What in the name of God is the matter with you?" By this

time one of the Islanders brought me a dagger… However, after some talk, I told Mr. Welch and some others that they might take him to his own house if they promised me security from further violence which they promised to do and said they would send for officers directly and have him arrested. On these terms, I gave him up. He has become bolder than formerly, having more [American] neighbors around him recently.



CCHS accession #1623.001

Alexander Latty's sketch of the layout of buildings and garden areas of Fort George during his time as storekeeper. ca. 1846 The river's edge is at the left of the drawing. At the bottom he has drawn the view we still see today to the north, across the river.

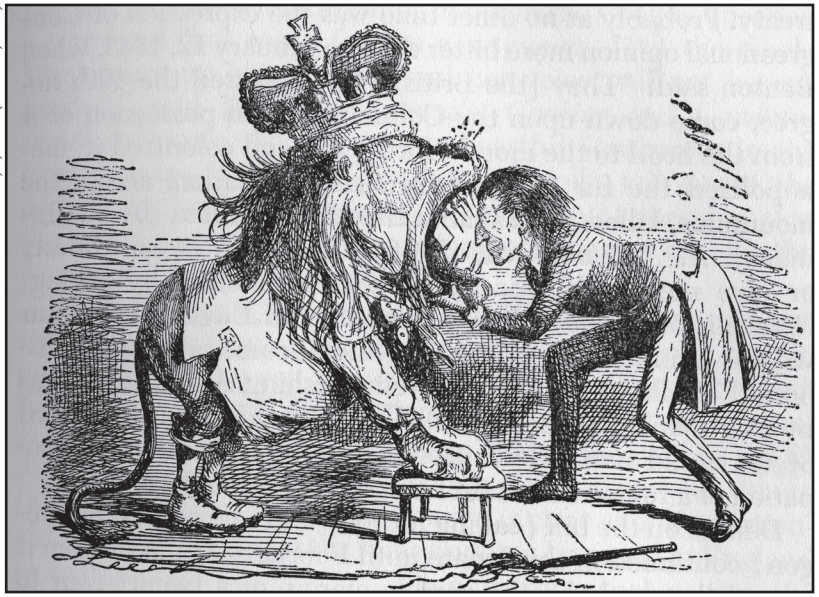
August 1, 1846 Niles National Register (St. Louis, Missouri) Pg. 4

OREGON'S ADVANCEMENT

Oregon is coming up to the position of our advanced civilization very rapidly. It has a provisional government formed to meet the exigencies of her position, and Oregon city is a thriving place, with all the elements of great future prosperity about it. Among these is its newspaper, the *Oregon Spectator*, a very well conducted sheet, the publication of which has recently been commenced there.

The editor in his salutatory address makes a proper reference to the character of the community in which the *Spectator* is located [Oregon City] and derives from the circumstances by which he is surrounded—from the fact that the people of Oregon are far removed from the civilized settlements of the United States, having thus far, no protection but that which is afforded by the provisional government of Oregon, and with but one interest to represent, and that interest, the welfare of the territory and the citizens of it—sufficient reasons for adhering to a perfect neutrality in politics…

Punch, X, p. 201 (London, 1846)



"Ridiculous Exhibition; or, Yankee-Noodle Putting His Head into the British Lion's Mouth."
A cartoon by John Leech, British caricaturist and illustrator, satirising the Anglo-American conflict over the disputed Oregon Country. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 set the border at the 49th Parallel; the US portion became Oregon Territory in 1848.

Oregon Spectator, *Sept. 17, 1846*

TO THE OREGON EMIGRANTS OF 1846.

Welcome! Ye freeborn yeomen of the soil,
Right welcome are you to our new made home;
Here ends your weary pilgrimage and toil,
You've reached the goal, and need no longer roam.
O'er dreary wastes, and arid sterile sands,
O'er mountain crag, through torrents mad'ning roar
You've toiled undaunted in courageous bands,
To seek a home, on this far distant shore.
Here waits ye then, ye tillers of the land,
The verdant prairie and prolific field,
Rich forest dells, where giant cedars stand,
Shading fresh treasures yet to be revealed.
The cunning artisan of every trade,
The learned professions, and the man of wealth,
Will for his journey here, be soon repaid
With ample competence, and blooming health.
Unlike the bee, that daily roams the bower,
Culling the nectar from each blushing stem,
Forsakes the rose, to taste some brighter flower,
But finds that none are quite as sweet as them.
You leave the crowded towns, and worn out fields,
Of old Columbia, for our virgin soil,
Here industry, a richer harvest yields;
In new Columbia, health repays your toil.
Come seize the plough, the awl, the axe, the spade,
The pond'rous sedge, or what so e'er you please,
And soon your labour will be well repaid,
With showers of plenty in the lap of ease.
Then here united let us firmly be,
And when Columbia shall extend her laws,
We'll hoist the stars and stripes of liberty,
From Old Atlantic, to Pacific's shores.

WRECK OF THE *SHARK*

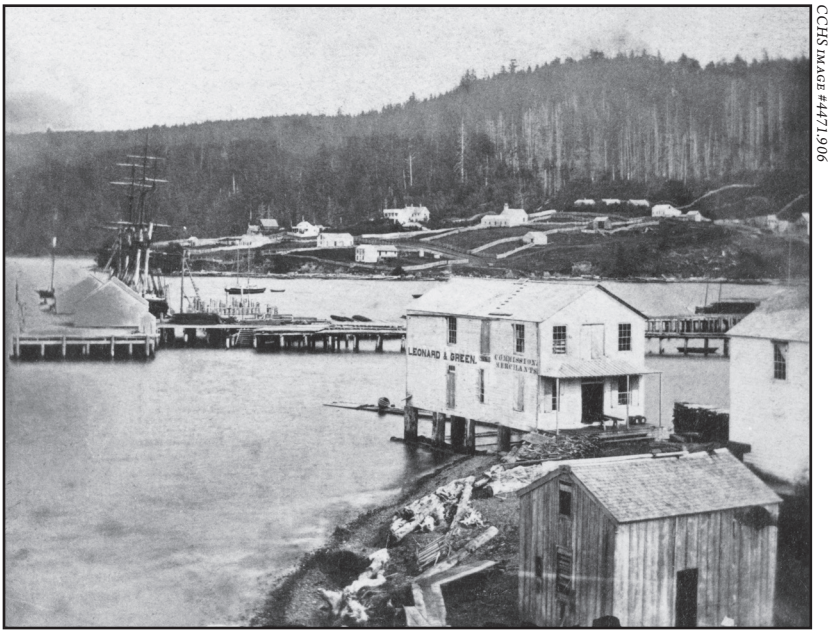
News of the U.S. Schooner *Shark*.—We have been favored in obtaining permission to publish the subjoined extract of a letter from Captain Howison, in relation to the wreck of the U.S. Schr. *Shark*. We are thus enabled to give our readers the particulars of this unfortunate event from the best and most authentic sources.

Fort Vancouver, Sept. 15th, 1846

Dear Sir—You have doubtless heard of the fate of the hapless *Shark*—swept to destruction by the overwhelming strength of the tide, for want of thorough acquaintance with which, I did not make due allowance. Instead of sailing along the channel, as I supposed it would, its direction was somewhat to the eastward of south, so that, when I hauled on the wind to pass to sea, it forced me down on the south breakers; in vain, she was tacked to the northward; the tide hung on the weather bow and brought the breakers on the middle sand directly ahead—from these we tacked again to the southward, but finding that we were hurried rapidly to leeward, an anchor was let go, but it did not hold a moment, the chain snapping off like a pack thread. We stood back to the northward, losing ground all the time, under the influence of the rapid tide; once more her head was put to the westward, and a favorable change of wind excited high hopes of passing safely out, but the next moment from 3 fathoms, she struck violently on a bank of 10 feet, and remained immovable, prostrating every hope of a rescue. I attempted then, by a press of sail, to force her in the direction of the tide which ran by us with the velocity of a mill race; but although her head swing in that direction, she did not advance an inch, but rose and fell with the swell of the sea, which immediately began to break over her broadside and told us plainly that she should float over its surface no more. Every preparation was instantly made to get out the boats, and the gig being first in the water, was loaded with the sick, the Purser and Doctor with the ship's papers and other valuables, with a view of dispatching her at once to the shore; but she swamped alongside, and the officers could only get back on board by being hauled in. Finding that no boat could then live alongside, nothing more could be done than await the abatement of the breakers which were rolling upon us with terrific violence. About 11 o'clock P.M. she had five feet water in the hold; the flood tide set in—the other boats were got out and loaded with as many men as they would safely carry, and dispatched to Clatsop shore, with orders to return

again on the ebb, to relieve those who remained on board. After the boats left, the masts were put away, and before 1 A.M., we were completely water logged. Lieut. Schenck, Midshipman Davidson and 21 men remained with me on the wreck—the flood tide gradually crowding us into narrow limits, until the bowsprit and the two quarterdeck houses were the only habitable spots on board, and these were frequently washed by the heavy swell. Each man was secured to the vessel by a cord passed around him—a precaution which may have saved some lives; for, towards daylight, the surf began again to set in heavily—the boats however soon came off, and we were soon relieved from our perilous situation. The conduct of the officers and men during the whole of this trying occasion, was most praiseworthy, and to their cool exertions and orderly manner of carrying on the duty, may be principally ascribed the preservation of our lives. The wreck was completely untenable an hour after she was finally abandoned, and by 3 P.M., not a vestige of the poor *Shark* was visible.

Cannon Beach was named for the cannons that washed on shore from the U.S. Schooner Shark.

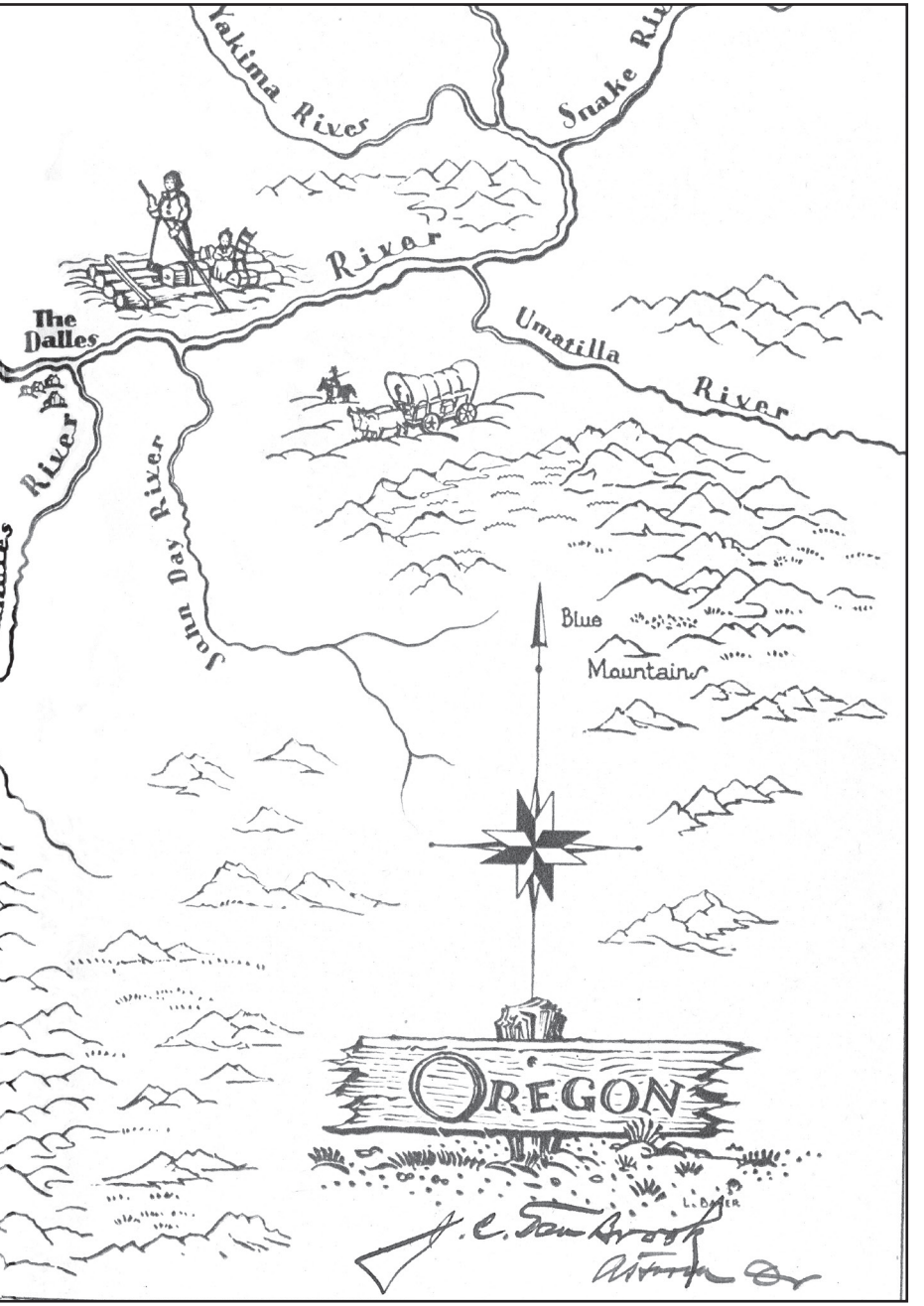


CCHS IMAGE #4471.906

THE SMALL BUILDING AT THE LOWER RIGHT WAS USED AS TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR THE CREW OF THE U.S. SCHOONER *SHARK* AND BECAME KNOWN AS THE SHARK HOUSE. THIS IMAGE TAKEN DURING THE 1850S.

The Empire Builders by Robert Ormond Case, published by the Country Life Press, 1949

J. C. Tenbrook, whose name appers at the bottom



corner, was the mayor of Astoria from 1927–1939.

February 18, 1847, Oregon Spectator (Oregon City), Im. 2

JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

ITS EXTENSION OVER OREGON.

An extension of the jurisdiction of the United States over this country has been long and most devoutly desired by every American within its limits. The news of the settlement of our boundary question seemed to promise us an immediate gratification of our hopes, and ever since the reception of this news have we been looking forward anxiously for the consummation of our wishes, expecting and expecting, till we are now almost heart-sick with disappointment. What is the policy of our Government? What is her intention? Why has she not given her people in the far-off wilderness, the protection of her great authority—that protection so long and unaccountably withheld! These and similar questions are daily propounded by our citizens without satisfactory reply.

In the histories of countries we can find no parallel to that of Oregon; rapid in its growth, mature in its development, mixed in its population, circumstances have conspired to render its history peculiar and interesting. Years without government of law of any kind, except the law of love inherent in the human heart, its industrious inhabitants still peacefully labored on, although one of the greatest branches of enterprise was entirely cut off at that period, from the American trade, by a powerful monopoly [Hudson Bay Co.] Time brought change and the necessity of human government and law. Hence originated the social compact and provisional government under which we now live, with that anomaly of an oath to which all of our executive officers are obliged to subscribe. [duties as a citizen of the United States or a subject of Great Britain]….

It is wished for, prayed for, daily and nightly, as a remedy for increasing grievances and the grand means of permanent prosperity. [The writer then expresses his expectation that they will soon have good news.]

Liquor War

William H. Gray, a resident of Clatsop Plains, carried on a campaign against liquor dealers whose sale of liquor to the residents, Indian and white, was responsible for many incidents of violence. Other concerned residents joined him. Their attempts to curb the sale sometimes led to more violence. David Ingalls of Astoria wrote the following letter to Gray about problems they had with George T. Geer who had been selling liquor to the Indians.

July 22, 1847 The Oregon Spectator (Oregon City, Oregon Territory), lm. 4.

W.H. GRAY ESQ.

Sir—We have a liquor dealer here—George T. Geer, at Sharksville [about 9th & Astor streets]—who is doing a land office business buying salmon. I am told he bought 18 gallons of Spanish brandy from the ship Brutus, which is very strong and fiery. He says he "will do just as he pleases in Oregon and no one shall hinder him, and if any one comes to disturb him he will give all his liquor to the Indians to induce them to protect him and themselves, and he will have the satisfaction of getting some of the Clatsops killed." A little war has broken out at Chenook already. It seems that the Chenooks have intended to kill some two or three Chenook people, for (as they say "potlatching tomanawas") giving medicine to the young tyee girl that lately died, so they gave their victim as much liquor as he would drink till he was helpless, and then stabbed him in many places…

I do not know that we are in any danger here more than usual, but it is very disagreeable. The law is useless in my hands for want of people to back it. I shall not pretend to put my life in danger of Indian malice without a community to back me.

Yours. DAVID INGALLS.

The following notice [was] sent to each person within reach.

TO THE CITIZENS OF CLATSOP COUNTY.

The undersigned respectfully notify you that the laws of Oregon are being set at defiance at Astoria, in trading and giving ardent spirits to the Indians, with threats to continue selling and giving in the violation of the law, as per letter of D. Ingalls Esq. accompanying this notice.

This is to request your personal services and presence at the house of Joseph Champion at the mouth of the Skepnoin [Skippanon], on Tuesday morning at six o'clock, without fail—bringing with you such arms, and twenty-five or more loads of ammunition, as each of you may have or be able to obtain for the occasion, &c.; to proceed from thence as may be deemed expedient and proper in the case.

Respectfully, yours,
W.H. GRAY,
CALVIN TIBBITS,
S.H. SMITH.

Tuesday morning, 22d June, a warrant, subpoena, &c. was put into the hands of the [Clatsop County] sheriff, Mr. Caples, and before 9 o'clock thirty-one men were assembled at the house of Mr. Champion. Mr. Robinson was called to preside over the deliberations. On motion, Mr. Thomas Owens was unanimously chosen to command the company on the present occasion

and to accompany the sheriff in the discharge of the duties of his office. A small canoe was dispatched with only two men [in] it, to land opposite Astoria in Gray's Bay, and request McGunigale to go over with them to the Fort and to watch the movements of the Indians and of Geer till the sheriff and a part of his posse could come over. A boat and some men followed and in a short time the remainder of the party proceeded; two boats landed below Sharksville, (the houses built by the crew of the *Shark*) on the point below Astoria—a canoe with five men proceeded directly on to the usual place of landing. On rounding the point they found Mr. Geer painting his launch, which they came alongside of.—Mr. Geer soon bethought himself that he wanted something from the house, he was requested not to go, but still insisted on going to the house and jumped into his skiff for that purpose. One of the men on shore, who by this time had arrived at their station behind the house, called to those in the canoe not to let him come ashore. By this time Mr. Geer found that he had but one way of escape and that was to put into the Columbia; he accordingly gave a specimen of his aquatic abilities and made off into the river [in his skiff] with the canoe in close pursuit. He was soon so unfortunate as to break or lose one of his oars, which left him but one wing to his flight. The canoe being well manned with five paddles soon came along side of him; here he displayed skill worthy of a better cause, for he kept the canoe and men all at bay (though I think he was unarmed and a part of the men in the canoe had their side arms) by pushing off the canoe and nearly upsetting it till a second canoe came to their assistance, which by maneuvering so as to come up under or against the stern of his skiff while he was in the bow fending off, he was shoved directly across the bow of the first canoe. Seeing his position, he at once made a pass at the bow of the first canoe, in which the five men were, attempted to jump into it and sink the canoe, men and all. Esq. Tibbets who was in the canoe and could not swim at all seeing him jump at his canoe evidently with the design to sink it, caught him by the hair of the head and both went into the water together. Geer went under, Tibbets caught the skiff and went but partly under. Geer came up and attempted to upset the canoe, but was prevented and taken in. By this time the skiff in the affray had swamped, and the canoe was half full of water. Geer made one attempt while in the canoe to upset it and was ordered to desist or he would be shot instantly, as there were several lives depending on the safety of the canoe, they all being from half a mile to a mile from shore, and the swells from an ebb tide were strong.

You may be assured that this cold water business is a splendid coolative to the fires of alcohol, especially as cool a draft as Geer had on this occasion, he was soon landed and made for his house, which by this time was surrounded or at least guarded. He called for his arms and threatened to shoot some person in the canoe. I afterwards learned that it was the one who told him to not upset the canoe, he was arrested and put under guard. The sheriff was ordered to proceed with his search warrant to see if he could find any liquor about the house, taking two witnesses with him he did so and found two kegs with liquor in them, and a bottle of Spanish brandy. During the time Geer was being arrested McGunnigale said and swore he would go and get the Indians to rescue Geer and send his arms to him, saying he would use them if he was in Geer's place. McGunnigale was immediately arrested and put under guard—a writ issued and served upon him forthwith to appear before W.H. Gray in Clatsop Plains.

Search was made wherever there was any reason to apprehend there was any liquor about the premises, and the question was asked by the sheriff on taking the bottle into his hand—"Whose is this?" No one made any answer. No one claims this, we will pour it out. He accordingly opened the bottle and handed it to his witnesses to know what it was. They decided, Spanish brandy of the best quality, or at least very strong. He then placed his hand upon one of the kegs and enquired whose it was and was answered by Mr. Geer—"mine by G---." The sheriff was ordered to take care of it till the case was decided; he then inquired—putting his hand upon the second keg—"whose is this?" Was answered by Geer, "that is Mr. Welch's." (Geer meant the keg only was Welch's, the liquor was Geer's as he afterwards stated. He had borrowed the keg of Welch.) He was ordered to take care of it for further proceedings.)

At this moment, some person moved that the liquor be disposed of now, that it should do no more harm. I second that motion, was heard from all quarters, with the remark "let the sheriff turn it out upon the ground." "Well," said he, "if you all say so, I suppose I must do it," and out came the bungs of the casks, and I should think some ten or twelve gallons of liquor went into the earth.

Dec. 6, 1847 New York Daily Herald *(New York, New York) Pg. 4*

1ST U.S. POST OFFICE WEST OF THE ROCKIES

Oregon Territory
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington City, March 29, 1847
[To John Shively]

Sir—On the eve of your departure for Oregon, the President has instructed me to communicate to you his views in regard to that territory, so that you may make them known to its inhabitants. He deems you a suitable agent for this purpose, as you are now an officer of the United States, having been commissioned deputy postmaster at Astoria.

The President deeply regrets that Congress did not, at their late session, enact a law establishing a territorial government in Oregon. A bill for this purpose passed the House of Representatives on the 16th of January last, by a vote of 133 to 35. It failed in the Senate, not, as I am firmly convinced, from any want of disposition on the part of the majority to provide a government for that interesting portion of the Republic; but because other urgent and important business connected with the Mexican war did not allow the necessary time before the close of their short session, to discuss and perfect the details. For this reason alone, it was laid upon the table on the day Congress finally adjourned…

CCHS Image #173.710

The first US Post Office west of the Rockies.
Two of the three women are identified as Mrs. Strong and Miss Elliot, John Shively's sister-in-law.

March 9, 1848, Oregon Spectator *(Oregon City, Oregon Territory (Im. 2)*

(Following is a notice that was to be sent to the home government (U.S. Congress) regarding difficulties with Indians.

The people of Oregon feel sore and sick in heart at the neglect which they have received at the hands of the Congresses and people of the United States. They came [out west] under inducements held out by both houses of Congress and by influential men in and out of Congress that liberal grants of land would be made to them, and with the reasonable expectation of the government of the rightful owners of the soil would speedily follow….

Oregon is settled by U.S. citizens and British subjects jointly. While British Canadian laws have constantly given protection to the British subjects, the United States laws have been denied to its citizens! Wherever and whenever British subjects have made a settlement, British countenance and protection have speedily followed them. These facts should mantle with crimson the cheek of every Republican [Members of the Republic] throughout the Union, as it has those in Oregon.

The citizens of Oregon can fight—they honestly inherit the qualifications; but while they fight they feel that, all here might have been peace and happiness, but for cruel neglect at home.

The Cayuse War

Doctor Marcus Whitman, a pioneer Presbyterian missionary, born in New York, settled at Wailatpu, at what became known as the Whitman Mission, a few miles west of Walla Walla. He provided medical care and religious training to the Cayuse Indians. Living with them were immigrant families who had made the long journey west, also native Indians who did much of the work to feed this small isolated community in the late 1830s and the 1840s. When a measles epidemic spread through the people at the mission, it most seriously affected the Indian population who had developed no immunity to it. Many died. The Cayuse Indians came to believe that Dr. Whitman was responsible for killing their people. A medicine man who could not save his patients or was suspected of doing harm might be murdered. That was the reason some gave for the sudden attack on Dr. Whitman and his wife, and other men at the mission. These murders and the abduction of the women and children by the Cayuse Indians outraged the white settlers. Some two hundred sixty miles away, a meeting was held at the house of W.W. Raymond on Clatsop Plains to see how many men could be raised to join a party to capture and punish the Indians responsible for those crimes and to rescue the captives. That happened two years later.

A. E. Thompson being called to the chair, and G.W. Bell deputed to act as secretary. Col. Taylor was called upon to explain the object of the meeting; after which a few pertinent remarks were severally made by Messrs. Hall, Raymon[d] and Taylor.

On motion of Col. Taylor, a committee of three persons was appointed to obtain all the arms and ammunition that can be obtained in this settlement for the use of our army, and deposite the same at this place by 8 o'clock to-morrow morning.—Messrs. Owens, Kindred and Condit were appointed said committee; after which the following preamble and resolution was introduced by Col. Taylor and unanimously adopted—

On motion, Resolved, That all who feel willing to go into their country's service by enlisting in the army, come forward and enter their names; whereupon, the following persons handed in their names—S.B. Hall, D.H. Trinder, John Richey, R.W. Morrison, N.A. Everman [Eberman].

The following resolution being introduced by Mr. Thompson was unanimously adopted—

Resolved, That while we view with entire approbation the war waged with the murderers of our fellow citizens, and sincerely desire a vigorous prosecution of the same, we sincerely hope that when our army calls upon us for donations of ammunition and provisions, that they are not to be spent in inactivity and Don Quixotic battles, but will be used in bringing the war to a speedy close, by a total extermination, if necessary, of the whole Cayuse tribe, without show of mercy.

Resolved, That the company leave for the place of rendezvous at 8 o'clock tomorrow morning, or as soon thereafter as possible.

On motion, it is adopted that a copy of these proceedings be furnished each of the newspapers printed at Oregon City.

On motion, the meeting adjourned, sine die.

A.E. Thompson, Chairman.

G.W. Bell, Sec'y.

July 15, 1848 Oregon Free Press *(Oregon City, Oregon Territory) Im. 2*

INDIAN LAND STOLEN

Letter to Mr. Curry:

I see by reference to the *Spectator* of July 13th, that H.A.G. Lee has issued his proclamation, as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, declaring that portion of Oregon Territory, heretofore occupied by Cayuse Indians, as forfeited, and

Captain Thompson and James Taylor, Esq., with their associates, are authorized to settle and hold land claims within said territory.

Who ever heard of an Indian Agent giving charters or grants to settle a colony? The law creating the office of Superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon does not express such a grant of power, nor can it be implied.

Col. James Taylor, who wanted to exterminate the Cayuse tribe, apparently hoped to profit by this venture, but did not, when the discovery of gold drew large numbers of Oregon men to California.

Excerpt from the Weekly Astorian *on April 5, 1899, Pg. 4*

FIRST U.S. CUSTOM'S HOUSE ON THE WEST COAST

On April 3, 1849, the late General John Adair arrived here [Astoria] on the old brig *Valadora*. He had been appointed as collector for this port before leaving the east and immediately opened an office, the *Valadora* being the first vessel to file her manifest with him. At that time the custom house was in a building located on lot 7, block 65, McClure's Astoria, McClure's Astoria, on the property now owned by Mr. L. Kirchoff. During the following September, however, it was moved to a private residence in Uppertown. Shortly afterward this building was burned and the structure known as the "old custom house" was erected at the expense of the government. It was the first building ever erected by the government on this coast to be used for custom house purposes. The structure is still standing and is today the property of the United States.

General Adair continued the office at that place until the inauguration of President Lincoln in 1861, when he was succeeded by William Adams who, probably for convenience sake, moved it into a building then standing on the southwest corner of Ninth and Bond streets. Later the office was taken to the Parker house and in 1874 it was moved into the new federal building now occupied as a post office and custom house….[At the same location still today.]

July 10, 1851, Oregon Spectator (Oregon City) Image 2

A FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

Just one year ago to-day the little steamer *Columbia* made her first trip to this place. She was the first steamboat on these rivers. Gladly was the pioneer hailed, and well pleased were we all to exchange the

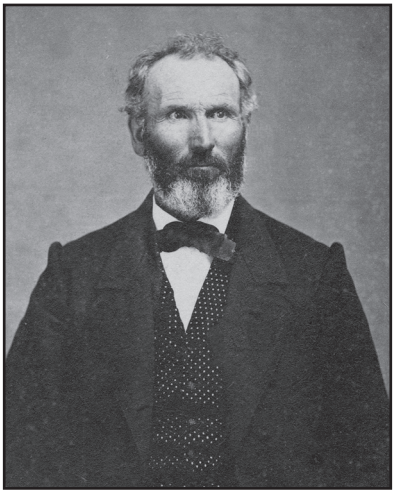


Image courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society. Acc. No. 9353.

Colonel James Taylor
He called for the extermination of the Cayuse People and the taking of their land.

slow moving and tedious canoe, for the more comfortable and certain, though miniature, steamer.

But another year has brought further improvements; and those of us who have just returned from a trip in the middle of the Columbia with Capt. Ainsworth and his fine boat, will adopt the best means of praising both, as soon as possible, by taking another voyage, to testify how much they enjoyed this.

We left here at 9 o'clock, A.M., on the third last. That great bugbear, the rapids, which the good people of the Willamette are so much frightened about, was passed with scarcely a thought of danger, and the boat sped on her way as swiftly and surely as a well raised animal, traveling the smooth beaten path to its own home.

The day was pleasant, the boat was crowded, and all were bound to enjoy themselves. Some walked the deck and looked at the shore, or talked of the pleasure that we were to receive; whilst others played backgammon or chess, in the cabin; and a third party, more pensive than the others leaned over the bulwarks, and watched the eddying waters as we glided along, leaving them to foam and whirl in our wake until they died away and were lost in the common current of the river; or perhaps their attention was attracted to the lone canoe of the Indian, as they slowly toiled on their way, appearing scarcely to move on the surface of the water; whilst our gallant boat dashed the spray aside in the majesty of her strength, leaving them far astern, to follow on their tedious course.

….We remained at Vancouver about an hour, then sped on our way down the mighty Columbia. As we left the shore, some of the gayest of the party started a dance on deck, which was renewed again in the cabin after supper and continued until near midnight…The cabin being entirely occupied by the ladies, the men disposed themselves as best they might, some on deck, and some below while others kept watch all night, startling the drowsy sleepers every now and then by joyous laugh or jovial song.

At Burale's we came to anchor until day light, when getting under

CCHS Image #7555.713

First U.S. Custom's House on West Coast.
A reproduction stands near the original site today.

way, we run over to lower Astoria, and came to anchor by half-past five. We remained at Astoria about an hour and a half, when we were boarded by General Adair and family, on their way to attend the celebration on Clatsop [Plains].

It being the wish of the majority of the passengers to visit those beautiful plains, the Captain acceded to their request and run down to, and came to anchor off the mouth of the Skippernown.

Gen. Adair took as many as his boat would hold, and as soon as he arrived at Lexington, which is two miles up the Skippernown, the citizens of that place manned their boats and came off, to take on shore all who wished to go. Arriving at Lexington, mule teams were in readiness to take us three miles further to the place of celebration, where we arrived in time for the ceremonies. After reading the Declaration of Independence, a patriotic song was most admirably sung, then an address was delivered by Gen. Lovejoy, upon the conclusion of which we all marched to the dinner table, where we had most ample testimonies of the fertility of the Plains, in the bountiful supply of good things, with which the table was loaded.

As old father time was hurrying on towards sunset, we were obliged to leave ere the ceremonies were finished, but the same kind spirit that met us, and took us on shore, accompanied us to the boat again. And it was with much regret that we bid adieu to those beautiful plains, and the kind-hearted people who welcomed us there.

October 7, 1851, Oregon Spectator *(Oregon City, Oregon Territory)*

STEAMBOATS IN OREGON.

One year ago, there was but one steamboat in Oregon, the *Columbia*, now there are eleven steamboats of different kinds running in the Columbia and Willamette rivers; not including the Pacific steamers *Sea Gull* and *Columbia*; the former running between Oregon and California, touching at the various points on the coast; the latter running semi-monthly with the mail, between Astoria and San Francisco.

The amount of money invested in steamboats at this time, may be set down at $100,000. Thus in the short space of one year a capital of over $110,000 has sought this kind of investment. And a trip on the river above, where it used to consume at least three weeks in making it, can now, the water permitting, be made in the incredible short time of two days, and that too in a good comfortable steamer….

Can the most knowing one among us begin to estimate what the trade on our rivers will be 20 years, or even 10 years hence?

Robbing The Dead

March 16, 1852, Oregon Spectator *(Oregon City) Image 1*

As more ships headed to the Columbia, shipwrecks become more common, their debris washing ashore. After the wreck of the ship General Warren*, a resident near the shore accused other Clatsop Plains residents of robbing the bodies that drifted on shore. William H. Gray was quick to defend them:*

Allow me to say, that 20 bodies have already come on shore. If the citizens of Clatsop are what they are represented to be, can you imagine their feelings. I can tell you mine, when I went a day or two since, and found two parts of bodies, or rather the bones of one, less the head, the body of the other, less the flesh from the face and skull, the flesh in a putrid state, it was that we are, at this moment, in a charnal house. Humanity calls upon us to give the winding sheet to the dead, while a viper is feasting upon our character abroad. Eighteen of the 20 bodies had scarcely anything on them, except fragments of their garments, it is impossible to identify them. The skeleton had a strong rope yarn around the waist, indicating that the person had, while on the wreck, fastened his body to some

spar or plank from which it had been dashed by the action of the surf.

Under any circumstances, a wreck, on our bar or along our coast, is dreadful.—That of the *Gen. Warren* is peculiarly so, 42 lives, many of them our fellow citizens and acquaintances, in a moment were swallowed up in the contending waves of the ocean and Columbia. Such of their bodies as have come on shore have been committed to the grave. The shock has been more or less felt all over our country; it is momentary elsewhere, and will soon be forgotten, but with us it is not so. Fragments of the vessel, of property, and bodies of men, keep this dreadful judgment in mind.—W.H. Gray

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March 3, 1858 The National Era *(Washington, District of Columbia) Page 4*

STATEHOOD FOR OREGON QUESTIONED

[A speech to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington D.C.]

Sir, the reasons which constrain me to oppose the admission of Oregon, apply irrespective of latitude or of any prevailing political sentiment among the people of the proposed State. In my judgment, sir, no Representative should inquire, upon a question of the admission of a new State, whether its locality be in the North or South, the East or West of the Republic; whether its people range themselves politically as Democrats or Republicans. I protest that no such considerations do now, or have at any time, influenced my mind upon this question…In my judgment, sir, this Constitution, framed by the people of Oregon, is repugnant to the Federal Constitution, and violative of the rights of citizens of the United States… Lest it may be said that I have overstated the odious provisions of this Oregon constitution, I read the entire provisions of this section of the schedule, and which is expressly declared to be "a part of this [Oregon] Constitution:

"Sec: 4. No free negro or mulatto, not residing in this State at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall ever come, reside, or be within this State, or hold any real estate, or make any contract, or maintain any suit therein; and the Legislature Assembly shall provide by penal laws for the removal by public officers of all such free negroes and mulattoes, and for their effectual exclusion from the State, and for the punishment of persons who shall bring them into the State, or employ or harbor them therein."

Oregon was voted in as a state in spite of this exclusivity clause. (No longer in effect.)

Feb. 3, 1859, Day News (London, England), Pg. 8

EXCERPTS FROM A SHIP VOYAGE

….Our sail until noon next day was along the Oregon coast, which only differs from that of its sister state [California] in its increased altitude, and the greater grossness of its timber. Behind the coast-range the mountains in the interior towered up in stern grandeur to the clouds, seemingly timber-clad in the loftiest elevation, and thickly coated with snow. There was no indication throughout the illimitable prospect that nature had ever been invaded in those inhospitable solitudes; nor could any little break be seen in our survey at all calculated to invite a visit of settlement or civilization. After breakfast the beautifully depressed headland marking the entrance to the Columbia River became clearly defined. After crossing the bar and rounding the promontory we traversed a little indented bay at its rear, and a few thin lines of blue smoke led the eye to some scattered slab huts, rejoicing in the sobriquet of the Pacific City, which as my informant assured me, was founded in most sanguine anticipations of the future importance; and such was the general idea propagated of its rise and growth by its zealous and energetic projectors, that in 1853, Mr. Wallace, in the slang of the country, "when running for Congress," paid it a special visit, but instead of a large community of thriving citizens, he found a sort of still-born little settlement, "more fitter," as he is reported to have said, "for red-headed woodpeckers than live Christians." Five years more seem to have passed over this city without shedding a ray of prosperity on its prospects, for according to the description of its appearance after birth it is not "an inch taller, an inch shorter, nor an inch broader," than when the first fire was lighted within its precincts. Oh, what a piercing afternoon it was as we first began ascending the Columbia. This keen cold wind driving down from the hoary summits of Mount St. Helens and Mount Hood over the snow-mantled forests, in the vast foot ranges at their feet, was the very concentration of frigid intensity. It really caused a shaving sensation, and when it passed through the beard one positively felt as if his chin and jaw were suddenly denuded. As I put up my hand to ascertain the absolute state of the case, I thought of "the thickening of the peltries," and came to the conclusion that Providence leaves reasoning creatures to protect their pelts from hard weather by artificial means.

The jaws of the Columbia may be said to open out between Astoria, on the Oregon side, and Chinook, in the Washington territory, where it is fully five miles wide. It is a

magnificent volume of water, and the only wonder is that it presents such a placid aspect, emerging from a system of wild mountain ranges. Astoria is the identical locality, and I was pointed out the precise little enclosure where the notorious John Jacob Astor made his first foothold in those regions and laid the foundation of his leviathan fortune, but the little hamlet did not participate in the aggrandizement of its frontier, who seems to have treated it like some poor relation, leaving it to struggle on by its own unaided resources…

Jan. 1, 1861, P.W. Gillette's Diary

I slept at Parkers in Astoria; when I got up, the sky was clear. But it soon began to rain violently & continued until 2 P.M. I kept up the time honored custom of New Years Calls to a small extent, making but 3 or 4. I was sorry to see the town full of drunken men today When I came here 9 years ago, this place supported three saloons, and the most of the people were intemperate & many of them habitual drunkards. This state of things continued about three years ago, When the "Sons of Temperance" were organized, & by the zeal & untiring efforts of an individual by name of Wm H. Gray (& others) was kept up for several years; during which time, 2, out of the 3 liquor shops "dried up" & but little liquor was drank. But this benevolent institution died out about two years ago; Scince which, drunkenness has steadily increased. There is no effort being made to counteract, or check this great and growing evil. At this time there are two Saloons here, both doing well. Astoria has no greater population than she had 6 years ago; yet she has improved much in many respects.

Astoria and the other early fur trading establishments along the Columbia River sent by John Jacob Astor served as evidence for the claim of the U.S. (after the Louisiana Purchase) from the east coast to the west coast, excepting the northern and southern regions claimed by Great Britain and Spain, reserving it for future expansion of the U.S. population and for the immigrants who sought this as their new home, without due consideration for all those who were displaced. Twenty years later, the fur trade was practically extinct while Astoria became the salmon canning capital of the world.

In the Spring 2020 issue of Cumtux is a story by CCHS Curator Dr. Chelsea Vaughn about the struggle for women's right to vote. Mentioned was Clatsop County's Mary Strong Kinney, one of the first women to serve in the Oregon State Legislature. Mary Kinney's great grandmother, Tabitha Moffatt Brown, known today as "the Mother of Oregon," shows us how women of little means but much courage can lead the way.

Reprinted from the Oregon Argus *(Oregon City, Oregon) May 17, 1856*

Tabitha Moffatt Brown
Mother of Oregon

Letter from Oregon

[The following letter is from the pen of Mrs Tabitha Brown, to her brother, Mr. Charles Moffatt, of Clarides, Geauga Co., Ohio. The writer was 66 years of age when she emigrated from Missouri to Oregon.]

Forest Grove, Washington Co., O.T., August 1854.

It is impossible for me to express to you the unspeakable pleasure and happiness your letter of the 20th of June gave me. Not hearing from you for so great a length of time, I had concluded myself to be the last of my father's family remaining here, a pilgrim in the wide world, to complete the work that God intended for me to do. Oh, that I could be present with you, and relate in the hearing of your children the numerous vicissitudes and dangers I have encountered by land and by sea since I last parted with you and M--- in Brimfield. It would fill a volume of many pages. But I will give you a few items from the time I left Missouri in April, 1846, for Oregon. I expected all of my children to accompany me, but Manthano was detained by sickness, and his wife was unwilling to leave her parents. I provided for myself a good ox-wagon team, and a good supply of what was requisite for the comfort of myself, Capt. Brown, and my driver. Uncle John insisted upon coming, and crossed the plains on horseback. Orus Brown, with his wife and eight children, Virgil K. Pringle, P. Brown's husband and five children, fitted out their separate families, and joined a train of forty more for Oregon, in high expectation of gaining the wished-for land of promise.

The novelty of our journey with a few exceptions, was pleasing and prosperous until after we passed Ft. Hall; then we were within 800 miles of Oregon City,—If we had kept to the old road down the Columbia River, all would have gone well; but three or four trains of immigrants were decoyed off by a rascally fellow who came out from

the settlements in Oregon, assuring us that he had found a near CUT OFF, and that if we would follow him we would be in the settlements long before those that had gone down the Columbia. This was in August. The idea of shortening a long journey, caused us to yield to his advice. Our sufferings from that time no tongue can tell. He left a pilot with us who proved to be an excellent man, otherwise we never would have seen Oregon. He said that he would clear the road before us—that we could have no trouble in rolling our wagons after him. He robbed us of what he could by lying, and left us to the depredations of Indians, wild beasts and starvation. But God was with us.

We had sixty miles of desert without grass or water, mountains to climb, cattle giving out, wagons breaking, immigrants sick and dying, hostile Indians to guard against by night and by day to keep from being killed, or having our horses and cattle arrowed or stolen. We were carried south of Oregon hundreds of miles into Utah Territory and California, fell in with the Klamath and Rogue River Indians, lost nearly all our cattle, passed the Umpqua mountains 12 miles through. I rode through at the risk of my life, on horseback, having lost my wagon and all I had but the horse I was on. Our Family was the first that started into the ravine, so we got through the mud and rocks much better than those that came in after.

Out of hundreds of wagons but one came through without breaking. The ravine was strewn with dead cattle, broken wagons, beds, clothing, and every thing but provisions, of which we were nearly all destitute. Some people were in the ravine two and three weeks before they could get through. Some died without any warning, from fatigue and starvation. Others ate of the flesh of the cattle that were lying dead by the wayside.

After struggling through mud, rocks, and water up to our horses' sides much of the way in crossing this twelve mile mountain, on the third day we opened into the beautiful Umpqua valley, inhabited only by Indians and wild beasts. We had still another mountain to cross, the cattle poor and many miles to travel through mud, snow, hail, and rain. Winter had set in; we were yet a long distance from any white settlements. The word was, "Fly, every one from starvation!—all who are not compelled to stay by the cattle to recruit them for further traveling." Mr. Pringle and Pherne insisted on my going ahead with their uncle John, and try to save our own lives. They were obliged to stay back a few days to recruit their few worn out cattle. They divided the last bit of bacon, of which I had three slices, a tea-cup of tea, the last division of all we had. (No bread!)

We saddled our horses and set off, not knowing that we should ever see each other again. Captain Brown was too old and feeble to render any assistance or protection to me. I was obliged to ride ahead as a pilot, hoping

to overtake four or five wagons that left camp the day before. Near sunset, came up with two families who had left camp that morning. They had nothing to eat, and their cattle had given out. We all camped in an oak grove together for the night. In the morning I divided my last morsel with them, to take care for themselves. I hurried Capt. Brown to ride fast so as to overtake the three wagons ahead. We passed through beautiful valleys and over high mountains, —saw but two Indians at a distance through the day.

In the after part of the day Capt. Brown complained of sickness, and could only walk his horse at a distance behind me.—He had a swimming in his head, and a pain in his side. About two or three hours before sundown he became delirious and fell from his horse. I was afraid to jump down from my horse to assist him, as it was one that a woman had never rode before. He tried to raise upon his feet, but could not. I rode close to him, and set the end of his Lignum Vitae cane, that I had in my hand, hard into the ground by him to pull up by. I then urged him to walk a little. He tottered along a few yards and gave out. I then saw a little sunken spot a few steps from me, and led his horse down into it and with much difficulty got him once more raised on his horse. I then requested him to hold fast by the saddle and horse's mane, and I would lead by the bridle. Two miles ahead was another mountain to climb over. As we reached the foot of it he was able to take the bridle in his own hand, and we passed over safely into a large valley—a wide, extensive, solitary place and no wagons in sight. The sun was now setting. The wind was blowing, and the rain was drifting upon the sides of the distant mountains. Poor me! We crossed the plain to where three mountain spurs met, with ravines meandering betwixt the points. Here the shades of night, were gathering fast, and I could see the wagon track no farther. I alighted from my horse, flung off my saddle and saddle bags, and tied him fast with a rope to a tree. The Captain asked what I was going to do. My answer was, "I am going to camp for the night!" He gave a groan and fell to the ground. I gathered my wagon sheet which I had put under my saddle, flung it over a fine projecting limb of a tree, and made me a fine tent. I then stripped the Captain's horse and tied him, placing saddles and bridles, blankets, &c.., under the tent, then helped up the bewildered old gentleman and introduced him to his new lodgings upon the naked ground. His senses were gone. I covered him as well as I could with blankets, and seated myself upon my feet behind him, expecting he would be a corpse before morning.

Pause for a moment, and consider my situation. Worse than alone—in a savage wilderness—without food or fire—cold and shivering—wolves fighting and howling all around me—the darkness of night forbidding the stars to shine. Solitary! All was

solitary as death! But that same kind Providence that ever has been was watching over me still. I committed my all to him and felt no fear.

As soon as light had dawned I pulled down our tent, saddled the horses, and found the captain able to stand on his feet….Half a mile ahead were the wagons. We were soon there, and partook plentifully of fresh venison.

(Fresh tracks of two Indians were plainly to be seen within eight or ten feet of where my tent was set, but I did not know that they were there. They killed and robbed a Mr. Newton but a short distance off, but would not kill his wife because she was a woman. The Indian killed one other man on our cut off. The rest of the immigrants escaped with their lives.)

We then traveled on, and in a few days came to the foot of the Callapooia Mountain. Here we were obliged to wait for more immigrants to help cut a road through. Here my children and grandchildren came up with us—a joyful meeting! They had been nearly starving. Mr. Pringle tried to shoot a wolf; but he was too weak and trembling to hold his rifle steady. They all cried because they had nothing to eat. Just then their son came to them with a supply, and then they all tried again.

Winter set in. We were many days in crossing the Callapooia mountain, having to go ahead only a mile or two each day. The road had to be cut and opened for us, and the mountain was covered with snow. With much difficulty we crossed over to the head waters of the Willamette. We followed the river down a few days, and gave up the idea of reaching the settlements until spring returned. Provisions gave out—Mr. Pringle set off on horseback for the settlements for relief, not knowing how long he was to be gone, or whether he would get through at all. In a week or so our scanty provisions gave out. We were again in a state of starvation. Much crying and many tears were shed during the day by all but one. She had passed through many trials sufficient to convince her that tears could avail nothing in our extremity.

Through all my sufferings crossing the plains, not once did I seek relief by the shedding of tears nor think I should not live to see the settlements. The same faith and hope that I had ever in the blessings of kind Providence, strengthened in proportion to the trials I had to encounter. Mr. Pringle's eldest son, Clark, shot down one of his father's best work oxen, and dressed it….I must now digress a little.

In the year '43 Orus Brown [Tabitha's son] came to Oregon to look at the country. In '43 he returned. When, within four or five hundred miles of the United States frontier, he and the three men with him were taken by the Pawnee Indians and robbed. They made their escape, and subsisted on thorns and rosebuds until they reached the frontier settlements. Very likely you saw the publication of Dr. White, O. Brown, Chapman, and one other, taken by the Pawnees in

1845. In '46, when we all started for Oregon, Orus Brown was appointed pilot, having crossed the plains twice before.—His company was six days a head of ours—he went down on the old immigrant route and reached the settlements in September. In six or eight weeks after, he heard of the immigrants at the south. He went off in haste with four pack horses and provisions for our relief. He met Mr. Pringle and turned him about. A few days and nights and they were at our camp. We had all retired to rest in our tents, hoping to forget our troubles until day light should remind us of our sad fate. In the gloomy stillness of the night footsteps of horses were heard rushing to our tents, and directly a halloo! It was the well-known voice of O. Brown and V. Pringle. Who can realize our joy! Orus, by his persuasion and perseverance, encouraged us to one more effort to reach the settlements.

Five miles from where we camped [we] fell in with a company of half-breed French and Indians with pack-horses. We hired six of them and pushed ahead. Our provisions once more became short, and we were put on allowance until we reached the first settlers. Then our hardest struggles were ended.

On Christmas day, at 2 o'clock P.M. I entered the house of a Methodist minister, the first I had set my feet in for nine months. He requested me to take the whole charge of his house and family thro' the winter. My services compensated for my own board and Captain Brown's thro' the winter.

For two or three weeks of my journey down the Willamette I had something in my glove finger which I supposed to be a button. On examination at my new home in Salem, I found it to be a 6 ¼ cent piece. This was the whole of my cash capital with which to commence business in Oregon—With this I purchased three needles—traded off some of my old clothes to the squaws for buckskins—worked them into gloves for the Oregon ladies and gentlemen, which cleared me upwards of $30.00, extra of boarding…

In May '47 I left Salem, which is now our seat of Government, for Oregon City, 230 miles down the Willamette, in an open boat, in company with my Methodist minister and family;—from thence down the Columbia river to the Pacific Ocean. Here I spent the winter at Clatsop Plains—a settlement south of the Bay. All this time there were but ten families residing there. I boarded with a Mr. Gray and lady, missionaries from Ballstown, New York—a very genteel family.—and spent the summer in visiting and bathing in the ocean.—The surf of two oceans—(Atlantic and Pacific)—has rolled over me.

In October I started in an open boat up the river for Salem. Wind and tide against me, we were thirteen days reaching Oregon city. Here I was within 30 miles of Tualatin Plains—Orus Brown's location. It would not do for a mother to pass by.—I luckily found a man, with an

Map showing the various routes taken to the Oregon Territory. Tabitha Moffatt Browntraveled via Applegate's Road.

empty wagon, going out, who lived neighbor to Orus. I gave two dollars for my passage, calculating to spend two weeks only with Orus and family, and reach Salem before the winter rains set in. Went to the Presbyterian meeting on Sunday. After meeting Orus gave me an introduction to Mrs. and Mr. Clark, missionaries from New York, who came here in 1840. They invited me home with them to spend a few days. Winter set in, and they pressed me hard to stay until spring. I accepted their invitation, and our intimacy ever since has been more like mother and children than strangers…

In October, 1847, news from the suffering immigrants reached us. Much sickness and many deaths on the plains, and many poor orphan children left to an unfeeling world, to be cared for by strangers. I said to Mr. Clark, "Why has Providence frowned on me and left me poor in this world! Had he blessed me with riches, as he has many others. I know right well what I would do!"

"What would you do!" Was the question. I would establish myself in a comfortable house and receive all poor children, and be a mother to them. He fixed a keen eye on me, and asked if I was in earnest in what I had said, "Yes, I am." He said, "I will try with you and see what effort we can make." Mr. Clark would get an agency and try to get assistance, and establish a school for the first in the Plain—that I should go into the old log meeting house and receive all the children, rich and poor. These parents who were able, were to pay $5.00 per week, including board, tuition, washing and all. I agreed to labor one year for nothing. Mr. Clark and others agreed to assist, as far as they were able in furnishing provisions, provided there was not a sufficiency of cash coming in to contain the poor.… The last Saturday in April found all things prepared for me to go into the old meeting house and cluck up my chickens the next Monday morning. The neighbors had collected together what broken knives and forks, tin pans and dishes they could part with, for the Oregon Pioneer to commence housekeeping, with a well-educated lady from the East, a missionary's wife, for a teacher. My family increased rapidly. In the summer they put me up in a boarding house.—I now had thirty boarders of both sexes, and all ages, from five years old to twenty-one. I managed them and did all my work except washing; that part was done by the scholars.

In the spring of '48 we called for trustees—had eight appointed. They voted me the whole of the boarding house, free of rent, for me to provide for myself—established the price of board at $2.00 per week, and whatever I made beyond my expenses was my own. In '51 I had forty in my family at $2.50 per week. Mixed with my own hands 3423 pounds of flour in less than five months.

Mr. Clark, for the establishment of the school, gave over to the Trustees one fourth section of land for a town

plat. It has been under town incorporation two years. And at the last session a charter was granted in connection with it, for a University, to be called Pacific University, with a limitation of $50,000. The President and Professors are already here, from Vermont. The teacher and his lady in the Academy are from New York.

You must excuse my troubling you with such a lengthy narrative…I had no expectation that a single relative, of my own, would ever know any thing of me—what I had done—where I had gone—or what had become of me, until I received your letter. You must be your own judges whether I have been doing good or evil.—-I have labored hard for myself and the rising generation; but have quit hard work and live at my ease. I am independent as to worldly concerns. Own a very nicely finished white framed house within a short distance of the public buildings which I rent for one hundred dollars per year.—Have eight other town lots, without buildings, worth $150 each. Also eight cows, and a number of young cattle. I have upwards of $1,100 cash, due me. Four hundred of it I have donated to the University. One hundred I gave to the Academy three years ago.

Thus much I have accumulated by my industry and good management, independent of my children, since I drew the sixpence from the finger of my glove.

The whole of Oregon is delightful, especially the Plains, of which there are many. But this West Tualatin is the most beautiful of all others. In a clear view of four or five mountain peaks, like sugar loaves, are to be seen pointing up to the heavens, covered with perpetual snow. They are volcanic, but have all burnt out in years past, except St. Helen, which has been on fire this season. They are generally from two and a half to three miles high. This plain contains, I suppose, twenty or thirty sections of land. From where the town and public buildings are situated, a full view of the whole is had. The outskirt of the plain is circled all around with hills at a few miles distant, covered to their summits with beautiful fine bunch grass, and fir and oak timber. Near to the edge the plain is circled clear around with beautiful fir trees, green all the year, and three hundred feet high. In front of them, in contrast with the green, are large spreading oaks, casting their shadows over the white houses of the farmers, many of which are in full view.

Grass is green here all winter, and cattle get their living without being fed. Snow seldom lies on the ground more than a few days.

Large improvements extend out into the plains in every direction. You may see, at all times, large bands of cattle, horses and people passing in every direction.—Morning and evening we have a cool refreshing sea breeze. The nights are cool and pleasant. We sleep under as much clothing, almost, in summer as in winter. It is very seldom that we have any thunder storms. And

Image Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society image #OrHi53563

Tabitha Moffat Brown

when we do they are very light and pass over in a few moments. A drought was never known in Oregon.

I wish you could see this beautiful healthy country. We have no prevalent diseases. Most of the deaths occurring here are immigrants whose systems are previously diseased before leaving the States. It is very rare that we hear of a child dying who was born in Oregon.

Every thing in the farming line has been very high, and merchandise very low. But at this time all is low. Horses last spring were from $200 to $300. American cows $100. Last Spring I could have taken $800 for my eight. Now I could not get more than $60 per head.

Adieu. TABITHA BROWN

PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
1849
PRO CHRISTO ET REGNO EJUS

Tabitha Moffatt Brown, a pioneer emigrant from Massachusetts, immigrated to the Oregon Country over the new Applegate Trail in 1846. After arriving in Oregon she helped to start an orphanage and school along with Rev. Harvey L. Clark in Forest Grove in 1847 to care for the orphans of the Applegate Trail party. In 1854, the institution became Pacific University.

News About Past Issues. . .

Shelly Moore of Vancouver, WA, called to say that someone sent her the Summer 2019 issue of Cumtux that has the photo of her brother, Michael Moore, on page 33 and 34. He is not the same boy on page 35, who is identified as Melvin Richardson. Michael, was a student at Star of the Sea School. After he contracted polio, Shelly was sent to stay for a while at her grandparents, the Rudats in Brownsmead. He recovered from the disease. He took dancing from Bill Nolan for several years and later played basketball at the University of Portland. He then attended Gonzaga University. He was one of the scientists (Inorganic Chemistry) who studied the moon rocks. Michael was a type 1 diabetic and died from complications of the disease some years ago.

An odd connection has been found between the balloonist story in the Spring 2020 issue of Cumtux and the stories in this issue about William H. Gray who first crossed the Plains to Oregon in 1836, later crossing several more times. His grandson, Hawthorne C. Gray is known for record-breaking trips he made in a balloon while serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps. On March 9, 1927, Gray set an unofficial altitude record of 28,510 ft (8.69 km). He passed out from hypoxia in the thin air, regaining consciousness only just in time to drop ballast and slow his fall after the balloon began descending on its own. On May 4, Gray set an unofficial record for highest altitude reached by a human being at that time, as he attained 42,470 ft (12.94 km). Because of the rapid descent of the balloon, Gray parachuted out at 8,000 feet, disqualifying him from recognition by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), which required that the balloonist land with his craft. Then on November 4, 1927, he reached 40,470 feet, but died due to lack of oxygen. He was still in the balloon when it landed, but it was not considered official because he wasn't alive. See Wikipedia (which unfortunately, conflates the two last flights.)

Source*: Gray Family History, 1999, Vol. II, Part V-2. Self-published by Cloann and Laurel S. Powell.*

CCHS image #98.010.001

Fort George, or Astoria, Columbia River—Site of the Hudson's Bay Company's Establishment.
This sketch first appeared in the February 10, 1849 issue of *The Illustrated London News*
"In the illustration, to the left, is shown the site of the Hudson's Bay Company's Establishment; to the right of which is an Indian lodge; and to the extreme right, a settler's log-hut."